

History of Food and Nutrition in Emergency Relief Foods Provided through U.S. Government Emergency Food Aid Programs: Policies and Customs Governing Their Formulation, Selection and Distribution.

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Abstract:

This report describes the food commodities that are used in U.S. emergency food aid programs and outlines issues in their distribution, selection and formulation that may limit their ability to meet the nutrition needs of recipients. Issues are being raised at this time because the U.S. Congress plans to renew the authorizing legislation by the end of 2002. The author summarizes quantity and quality problems with food aid contributions and the difficulties experienced with the coordination of food aid with related needs of disaster victims. He identifies the foods supplied for emergency feeding by the U.S. Government and the World Food Program, and describes the limited applications of nutrition science to the formulation of the processed foods provided through U.S. food programs. The core of the report outlines the dominant non-nutritional priorities, stemming from the linkages to U.S. agricultural supply markets, U.S. commercial food interests, food aid pledging customs and difficulties in U.S. Government humanitarian response coordination. The presentation concludes with a review of issues, emphasizing the need for further studies, and some suggestions for shaping future food aid programs and policy with a strengthened capacity for protecting and promoting the nutritional status of disaster victims.

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